

Documents on Diplomacy: The Source

"If I had followed the course of my colleagues. . ."

A Letter from Charles Francis Adams to Charles Francis Adams Jr.

London, June 14, 1861

My position here thus far has not been difficult or painful. If I had followed the course of some of my colleagues in the diplomatic line this country might have been on the high road to the confederate camp before now. It did not seem to me to be expedient so to play into the hands of our opponents. Although there has been and is more or less of sympathy with the slaveholders in certain circles, they are not so powerful as to overbear the general sentiment of the people. . . . I am therefore endeavoring to establish such relations with them as may re-establish the confidence between the countries which has been somewhat shaken of late. Circumstances beyond my control will have more to do with the result for good or for evil than any efforts of mine. I wait with patience—but as yet I have not gone so far as to engage a house for more than a month at a time. . . .

Source

Ford, Worthington Chauncey, ed. *A Cycle of Adams Letters, 1861-1865*, in two volumes. [Boston: 1920]